




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MIRANI

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**TOBACCO AND OTHER SMOKING PRODUCTS (VAPING) AND OTHER
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—KAP) (4.10 pm): I rise to speak on the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Amendment Bill. The bill amends the Forestry Act 1959, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 and the Tobacco and Other Smoking Products Act 1998. I thank the committee and the secretariat for all the work we have done. We certainly looked into how vaping is affecting people. Many young people are badly affected by vapes. My daughter's boyfriend is very affected by vapes. He coughs incessantly. He cannot walk up stairs properly. He has given up vaping and it is taking him a long time to come back from it. The way vapes are distributed is aimed at young children. Tobacco shops are popping up everywhere, some with SpongeBob on them. They appear to be kid friendly. They are now distributing little sacks of nicotine rather than the vape itself.

As fast as we can make legislation to change the vaping industry and the way it affects us, it morphs. Our policies and the way we set them, including the tax system, makes everything so expensive and drives the black market for vapes and illegal tobacco. We are losing out on billions of dollars of tax from the industry because tax is set so high. It is driving a black market. The state and federal government need to look at revising policies so that tobacco is affordable and tax revenue is gained. We are seeing it with alcohol and vapes and we will soon see it with the fishing industry, because we have closed that down as well.

The bill will enable the appointment of an authorised person under the act to monitor and enforce compliance with its provisions. Officers need to go in and shut down these sellers of illegal vapes and tobacco products. Pam from Townsville owns eight stores. She is a licensed seller and distributor of tobacco products. She rings me constantly saying, 'Stephen, the government do not seem to be shutting down these stores. They are not actively going in there and closing them down.' These stores are in Sarina and Mackay—even across from the hospital in Mackay. A tobacco store pops up in every little place that has not been rented for a long time. The government needs to get onto that and shut these places down. They need to go in there, take all their product and throw it in the bin so they cannot sell it. That is not happening. It is affecting businesses that are legitimate.

The bill further authorises the chief executive to share intelligence and data with other law enforcement jurisdictions, and police officers will be deemed authorised persons who may take compliance action under the act. The bill also significantly increases the maximum penalties for noncompliance if we are not enforcing it and sending our officers in to shut the places down. The schools are having problems with it and parents are having problems with it. It is so easy to have a toke on a vape. You do not have to light up. You do not have to carry any paraphernalia. You can take it straight out of your pocket and put it into your mouth. It is an easy way to get a nicotine fix. The government needs to do more to shut down the illegal vape trade. It needs to work with licensed tobacco sellers to understand how it works so that we can infiltrate those other businesses.